अनेक आरोप हो चुके है और अनेक स्टेट्स में हो चुके हैं। हमारी स्टेट में भी यह हुआ है और अनेक स्टेट्स में भी यह हुआ है...(**व्यवधान**) तो इस बारे में आप के पास जानकारी या शिकायत आई है तो आप ने क्या इंक्वायरी की है ?

श्री शांता कुमार : सभापति जी, भारत सरकार ने इस के लिए इंतजाम किया है कि हमने पर्मानेंट इंस्ट्रक्शंस दिए है कि जब हमारे गोदाम से अनाज उठाया जाएगा तो ज्वांइट सैंपलिंग होगी। वहां राज्य सरकार का एक अधिकारी होगा और फूड कार्पोरेशन का एक अधिकारी होगा। वे दोनो ज्वांइट सैंपलिंग करेंगे कि जो अनाज उठाया जा रहा है, वह खाने योग्य है या नहीं है। यदि वह खराब है तो आप मत उठाइए।...(**व्यवधान**)...इसलिए अब यह जिम्मेदारी राज्य सरकार की है।

श्री प्रफुल्ल पटेल : जो भ्रष्टाचार हो रहा है, उस के बारे में बताइए। ...(**व्यवधान**)...

CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERSTO STARRED QUESTIONS

Wage Disparity

*722. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is considerable disparity in rates of minimum wages in various regions of the country ranging from Rs. 19.25 per day in Pondicherry to Rs. 93/- per day in Delhi;

(b) if so, the reasons for such a big variation from region to region;

(c) whether Government have felt the desirability to bring in regional uniformity in respect of minimum wages;

(d) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, There is disparity in rates of minimum wages in various regions of the country. The disparity is due to differences in socio-economic and agro-climatic conditions, cost of living, productivity etc. Under the Minimum Wages Act, both the Central and State Governments are the appropriate Government to fix, revise and enforce minimum wages in scheduled

employments under their respective jurisdictions.

(c) to (e) With a view to reduce the disparities within the Region the Central Government have issued guidelines for setting up Regional Minimum Wages Advisory Committees. In the absence of a uniform minimum wage in the country, the Central Government floated the concept of a national floor level minimum wages and fixed it at Rs. 35/- per day in 1996 based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Rural Labour (1991) and subsequent rise in the price level. The national floor level wage was last revised to Rs. 45/- per day with effect from 30.11.1999 to neutralize further rise in the Consumer Price Index. The States/UTs have been requested to ensure that the minimum wage in none of their scheduled employments is below the national floor level wage.

Privatisation of coir board

*725. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government decided to privatize 32 showrooms as well as the Hindustan Coir of the Coir Board;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are aware of strong resentment over this decision; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) and (b) The Expenditure Reforms Commission (ERC), which had been set up to suggest measures for effecting improvement and reducing budgetary support for Government funded institutions had recommendedlhat Coir Board should withdraw from direct production and marketing activities and instead assume the role of a facilitator and promoter of coir industry.The ERC had *inter-alia,* suggested that the showrooms-cum-sales depots of Coir Board should progressively be handed over on agency or commission basis to trading houses with the exception of a few showrooms in metropolitan towns which may be retained for demonstration purposes. Similarly, the Hindustan Coir Factory should also be privatized or handed over to a cooperative. The Government is in agreement with the recommendations of the ERC.